

Lancers move one step closer

state basketball tournament

By Don Lindstrom MAR 20 1982
State Journal sports reporter

Madison La Follette continues to survive its basketball cliffhangers and is now at the threshold of a second state championship.

Rick Olson and Steve Amundson combined for 46 points Friday to spark the Lancers to a come-from-behind 62-57 victory over Lake Geneva Badger and a berth in tonight's Class A final of the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association Boys' State Basketball Tournament.

A half-court pass from Olson to Tom Luksiich, who scored in for a layup with just 12 seconds left, that provided the clincher before 12,000 spectators at the UW Field House.

The Big Eight Conference champions, now, with eight straight victories, carry a 13-1 record into the 7:05 p.m. title showdown against Stevens Point. La Follette won the 1977 crown.

As it turned out, Badger Coach Jerry Stelze was wise to the strategy which resulted in Luksiich's basket and the resulting 60-57 La Follette lead, but was powerless to act in light of the fact his team was out of timeouts.

"I just knew what would happen when I saw La Follette bring up for that out-of-bounds play," Stelze said. "I saw a nightmare coming and couldn't do anything about it."

"We let it up to run someone out of

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LAKE GENEVA BADGER

| | pts | reb | ft | ft% | pts |
|----------------|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| Gary Ruch | 17 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 4 |
| Tim Schneider | 17 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 13 |
| Ed Rinde | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Ed Rinde | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Mike Clifford | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Steve Stahulak | 3 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 10 |
| Totals | 38 | 17 | 22 | 23 | 17 |

MADISON LA FOLLETTE

| | pts | reb | ft | ft% | pts |
|----------------|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| Scott Hagen | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Steve Amundson | 19 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 17 |
| Tim Jordan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Tom Luksiich | 5 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Rick Olson | 12 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 19 |
| Brian Hinzman | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Bob Dilante | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Brad Thering | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Totals | 38 | 20 | 16 | 14 | 27 |

Rebounding totals include team rebounds

| | pts | reb | ft | ft% | pts |
|-------------|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| Badger | 38 | 17 | 22 | 23 | 17 |
| La Follette | 38 | 20 | 16 | 14 | 27 |

Field goal percentages — Badger 45.7, La Follette 52.6. Free throw percentages — Badger 57.3, La Follette 34.4. Turnovers — Badger 20, La Follette 20. Officials — Bob Cox, Jim Kerner, Jim Aili — 17, 24.

Olson's 29 carry Lancers

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the pack," said La Follette Coach Pete Olson. "When an opponent gambles against us with a press, we're not afraid to try it. We've executed it before. This time we were fortunate to get the ball in the hole."

Luksiich barreled full blast from the center line with Steve Stahulak on his heels. Luksiich, however, won the race to the basket.

"I knew he (Stahulak) was there," acknowledged Luksiich. "I could feel him, but I just had to make that shot."

Seven seconds later, Brian Hinzman capped the scoring with two free throws.

La Follette struggled early, but, motivated by the shooting of Olson and Amundson, climbed from a 39-34 deficit to a 38-49 lead with 3 minutes, 7 seconds left in the game.

But even then La Follette wasn't assured of victory. Gary Ruch and Stahulak were instrumental in an eight-point Badger run that closed the gap to one, 38-57, before Luksiich's effort.

"This was a tough, tough victory," said Coach Olson. "Our kids are a good second-half team, but we like to get ahead. I'd certainly like to change the script a bit and blow someone out for a change."

Rick Olson enjoyed his second straight 29-point performance — including 16 in the second-half rally —

while Amundson added 17. Badger's man on the inside, Tim Schneider, accounted for 33 — including 15 of 16 from the free-throw line — while Ruch had 12 and Stahulak 10. Mike Clifford was the only other Lake Geneva player to score, dropping in two points.

"Their game plan was to get it to Schneider and Ruch and got fouled," said Coach Olson. "We were in trouble and put them on the line too early. Badger is a heck of a competitive team."

Stelze agreed. "Schneider had a great tournament and Ruch is a super player. (He came into the game with 1,006 points.) We played very well, just like we wanted."

Badger, with a patient, ball-control offense, enjoyed phenomenal shooting success, hitting 20 of 30 shots for a .667 pace. Schneider was nine-for-11, but it was his free-throw accuracy that scared the Lancers. They didn't want to put him on the line in the first place, but his inside moves drew fouls and he hit eight straight after an earlier run of seven.

La Follette, meanwhile, didn't shoot too shabbily, either, dropping in 26 of 50 for .520. Olson, with his 21st game over the 20-point mark, connected on 12 of 24. He added five straight free throws, including four during the second-half rally. He did open the game with four missed field goals, but then hit five in a row.

"It was not a good start, for him, or

the team," Coach Olson admitted. "We expected to shoot better early. Badger deserves a lot of credit. They were patient and slowed it down a little more than we expected."

"I thought when we had a good lead we could ice it by getting the ball to Ruch for fouls. They were doing a good job of overplaying him. We went into a press and our defense really did the job in the fourth quarter."

Stelze said a big part of Badger's problem was Olson, saying, "They (the Lancers) may not be quite as quick as Brown Deer (Badger's quarterfinal opponent), but they hit us at our weakness."

The headache Olson provided was only part of it. Badger committed 20 turnovers, including a costly one following Luksiich's layup. At least five others came on charging fouls which resulted from La Follette's defensive quickness.

It was an uphill scramble for La Follette. Amundson opened with a three-point play, but that was the Lancers' last lead until the end of the quarter when two quick jump shots by Olson gave them a 3-8 advantage.

Schneider was hot at the line in the second quarter, scoring 15 points, seven on free throws. Bob Dilante gave La Follette a brief 20-19 lead and it was tied three times before Badger took a 28-24 halftime edge on Schneider's final two free throws.